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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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In Reply Refer To:  
1520 (BC-680) P

May 15, 2001

EMS TRANSMISSION  
Information Bulletin No. BC-01-065

To: All Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Employees

From: Director, National Business Center

Subject: Employee Responsibility for Government Property

The purpose of this directive is to remind BLM employees of their personal responsibility and accountability for personal property in their use. The authority for this policy is in the BLM Manual 1520. Attachment 1 provides detailed employee responsibilities in a plain-English format, and Attachment 2 provides a table of minimally acceptable security precautions in regard to personal property in an employee's care.

If there are any questions concerning the above information, please contact your local property management staff, or Gwen Rush at the National Business Center (303) 236-9465.

Signed by:  
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Director, National Business Center

Authenticated by:  
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2 Attachments

- 1-Employee Responsibility for Government Property (2 pp)
- 2-Table of Minimally Acceptable Security Precautions (1 p)

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## EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

**Do you know what your responsibilities for government property are?** You are responsible for the proper care, safeguard, maintenance and use of all government property in your custody at all times, even if you have not signed a receipt for the property.

**Are you a custodial property officer?** Custodial property officers are designated officials (usually supervisory or management) who are responsible for ensuring that property under their control is accounted for and cared for properly. Custodial property officers are also responsible for providing documentation regarding loss, damage or theft of government property under their control and for ensuring that departing employees complete a final salary clearance procedure. For further information about custodial property officer responsibilities, please refer to the BLM Manual 1520.04 Responsibilities on the Property Homepage at <http://ncweb.sc.blm.gov/bc680a/>.

**Do you know the regulations regarding personal use of government property?** Although limited use of government property, such as personal computers, printers, fax machines, copiers, and telephones is now authorized under certain conditions during non-duty hours, personal use of government vehicles and most other equipment is specifically prohibited. For specific guidelines, please see the National Business Center Instruction Memorandum No. 2001-093 dated February 13, 2001, and the Departmental memo on this subject dated June 14, 2000, at the web site <http://www.doi.gov/pam/personalusepolicy.html>.

**Is your sensitive property secure?** Any equipment that is highly susceptible to theft, such as laptop computers, portable radios, cameras, cellular telephones, etc., must be kept in a locked room, locking cabinet or desk, or secured with a security cable when not in use. If secured storage is not available, contact your supervisor or custodial officer immediately to obtain proper locks, security cables and/or locking storage cabinets as soon as possible. For clarification of minimally acceptable security precautions, keep the attached table where you can refer to it during the year.

**Do you exercise the same care and vigilance with government equipment that you would exercise with your own personal property?** Report all incidents of damage, loss, or theft immediately to your supervisor, who will determine the resources to be expended searching for the missing item and/or documenting the incident.

**What if you need to remove usable parts from worn out or obsolete accountable property and use them as spares?** This is a completely acceptable procedure to save the government the cost of new parts or equipment **if** the paperwork is submitted in advance. Contact your property disposal specialist, property manager or warehouse staff for more information. If the paperwork is not submitted in advance, then a survey action will be required, and you may be held liable for the loss.

**Do you purchase sensitive property with a government bank card?** It is your responsibility to ensure that sensitive property is taken to your property manager to be entered into the accountable property records. All government property which is not expendable should be marked as BLM property.

**Do you operate a government vehicle?** It is the operator's responsibility to be familiar with the vehicle and its operating characteristics. The operator must insure that the vehicle is operated safely, within government regulations, and is properly maintained. Proper fluid levels and tire pressures are the operator's responsibility. Expenses resulting from vehicle damage due to inadequate or improper maintenance, or negligent operation, including towing charges, can be charged to the operator's benefitting activity.

**What happens if you lose or damage property?** The State Office Board of Survey investigates the incident and considers the possibility that the employee involved was negligent and/or responsible for the loss, damage, or destruction. (410 DM, 60.805)

**What happens if you loan the property to someone else and they lose or damage it?** You can be held liable for property loss unless you have transferred accountability of the property by using a DI-105 (Receipt for Property) or similar form. However, accountability of the property can only be transferred temporarily to other BLM employees using this method. You must contact your property manager and/or custodial property officer if you want to permanently transfer accountability of property to someone else. Because contracted employees, volunteers, and employees of cooperating agencies have contractual agreements with our agency, it is likely that their liability will be limited. Government property used by these individuals should be assigned through their custodial property officers (Contracting Officers, Assistance Officers or Volunteer Coordinators).

**TABLE OF MINIMALLY ACCEPTABLE SECURITY PRECAUTIONS:**

<b>In the office:</b>	<b>On the road or in the field:</b>
<p><b>Sensitive equipment:</b> Laptop computers, handheld computers, radios, cameras and cellular telephones, etc., are especially susceptible to theft and should be stored in secured, locking cabinets or desks when not in use. Laptops that are stored in docking stations need to be locked in the docking station or attached via a security cable. If secured cabinets are not available, you may: call a locksmith and have a lock changed or a key made; contact your warehouse staff to determine if locking furniture is available; contact your procurement staff to arrange to acquire furniture necessary to provide security; or buy a hasp and padlock and install them on the furniture you have.</p> <p><b>The Custodial Officer needs to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain pooled sensitive equipment in a locked cabinet and only reissue it to other employees on a Receipt for Property (DI-105).</li> <li>2. <b>Never dispose of government property, no matter what method is used - trade-ins, donations, destruction or sale - without Property Management Authorization.</b></li> </ol> <p><b>During an office move:</b> inventory all equipment you are responsible for both before and after the move. <b>Occupying space with other agencies:</b> If you are assigned to an office space under the control of another agency, take time to become familiar with the security policy of that office. Contact your supervisor if the office cannot provide you with the minimum safeguards outlined above.</p>	<p><b>When In the Field:</b> Equipment should be inventoried frequently while in use to ensure that a loss has not occurred. If a loss occurs, notify your supervisor and take immediate steps to find the equipment. If you are using vest pockets to hold small field-going equipment, make sure that the pockets are secure.</p> <p><b>When operating a government vehicle:</b> Remain alert and fully aware of vehicle and road conditions. If you become drowsy, change drivers or take a break from driving for several minutes. If any drivers are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with a vehicle, take a few minutes before you start to find all controls and make all adjustments necessary. Allow yourself plenty of time to get where you need to go.</p> <p><b>Always lock the vehicle when you park it.</b></p> <p>When leaving equipment in the vehicle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>! Use a locking truck box or car trunk</li> <li>! Place equipment out of sight behind or under a seat of locked vehicle (short-term only)</li> <li>! Remove equipment from the vehicle if other employees are going to use the vehicle, or when leaving the vehicle with vendors.</li> </ul> <p><b>When in Official Travel:</b> Keep sensitive property with you whenever possible. Airlines and motels do not assume responsibility for lost or stolen valuables. Do not check sensitive equipment as baggage on airlines. If you must leave sensitive property in a motel room while you are out of the room, store the property out of site. Use of security cables is strongly recommended.</p>